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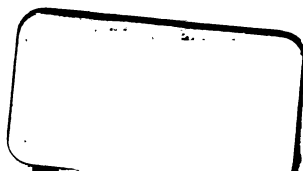
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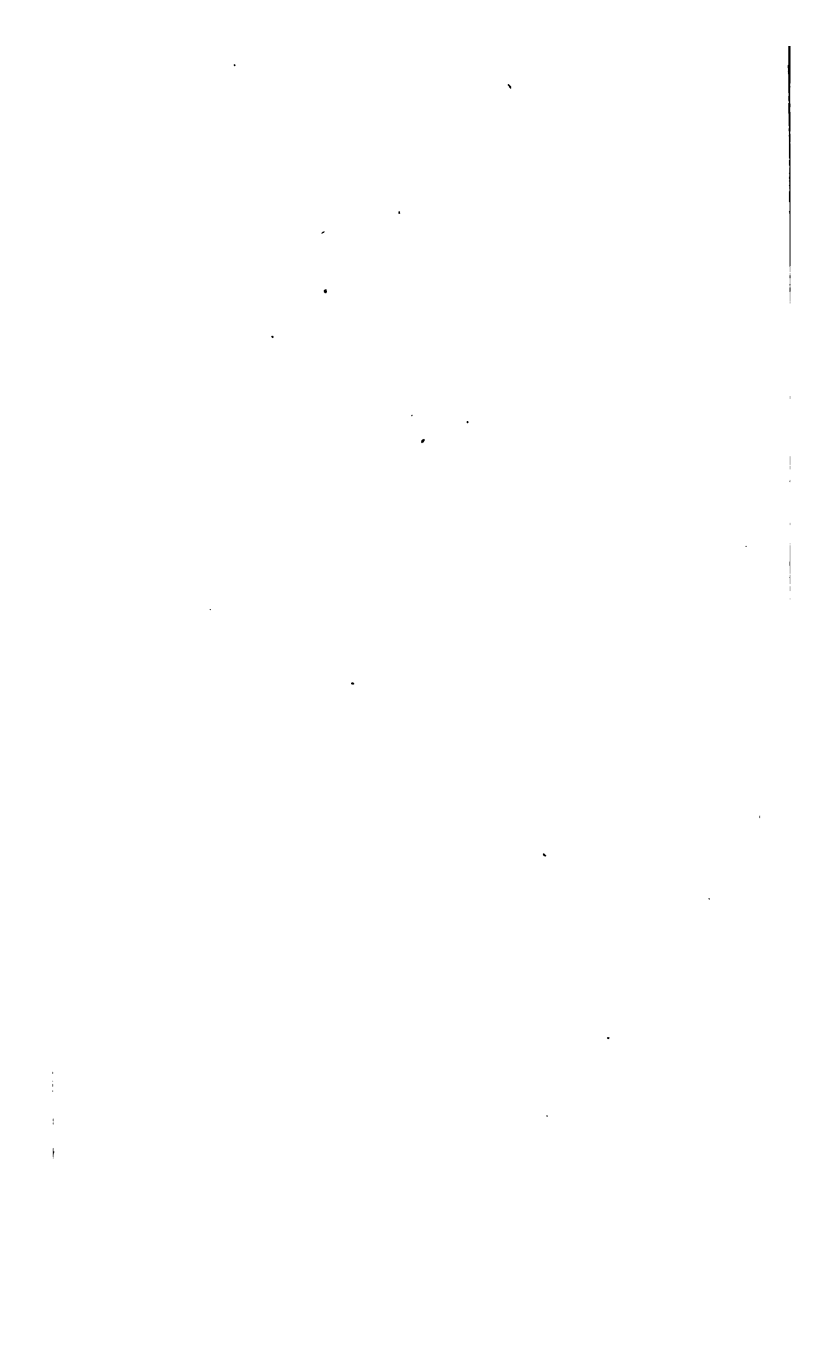


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THE SLING AND THE STONE;
OR,
WHAT IS CHRISTIAN EDUCATION?

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE PARISH CHURCHES OF
MANSFIELD WOODHOUSE, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE,
AND
NORMANTON-ON-SOAR, LEICESTERSHIRE,

IN BEHALF OF
THE SUNDAY SCHOOLS,
On the Tenth and Eleventh Sundays after Trinity, 1842.

BY THE
REV. FRANCIS MINDEN KNOLLIS, M.A.

Fellow of St. Mary Magdalen College, Oxford;
late Rector of Congerstone, Leicestershire;
and Officiating Minister at Costock, Nottinghamshire.

Published by Request.

"I call Education, not that which is made up of the shreds and patches of useless arts, but that which inculcates principles,—polishes taste,—regulates temper,—cultivates reason,—subdues the passions,—directs the feelings,—habituates to reflection,—trains to self-denial,—and more especially, that which refers all actions, feelings, sentiments, tastes, and passions, to the LOVE AND FEAR OF GOD."—*Hannah More.*

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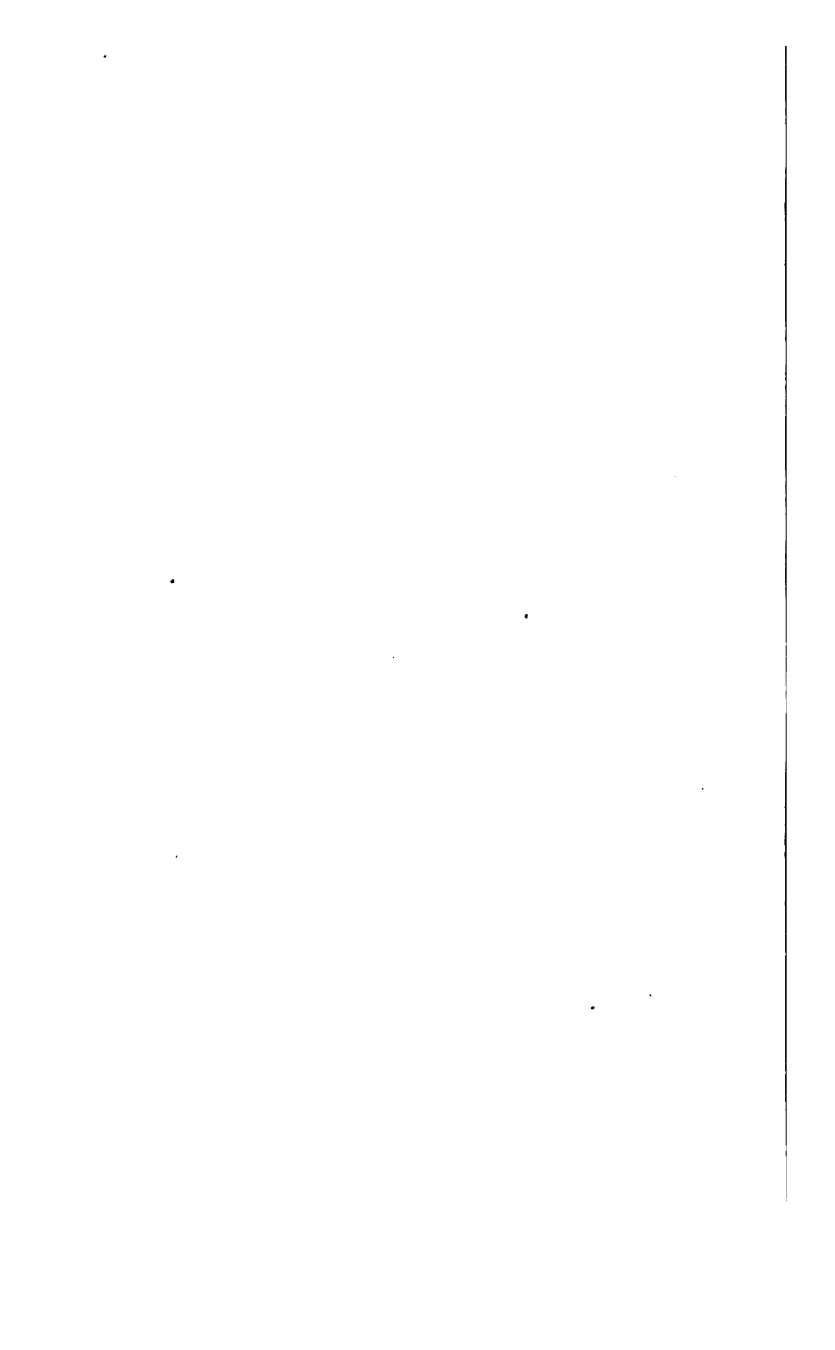
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NOTICE.

THE publication of the following Sermon was so kindly and earnestly wished, both by the Curate of Mansfield Woodhouse, and many of its respectable Inhabitants, that the Author could not find in his heart to refuse compliance with their flattering desire. He earnestly trusts that it may be found of real and lasting use to all into whose hands it may chance to fall.

Costock Rectory,

August, 1842.



A S E R M O N ,

&c.

1 SAMUEL XVII. 50.

“ SO DAVID PREVAILED OVER THE PHILISTINE WITH
A SLING AND WITH A STONE :—BUT THERE WAS
NO SWORD IN THE HAND OF DAVID.”

THERE are probably few passages of Holy Writ more familiar to our ear than that from which I have selected the words of our text. The victory of the Jewish stripling over Philistia's haughty champion is almost the infants' Sunday tale. And doubtless many of those to whom I now address myself, can remember the time when they sat and listened to it with wonder and delight, in all the innocence and simplicity of early and confiding youth. And when, beneath the Sabbath calmness of a summer eve, they drank in with eager ear the voice of some fond and gentle mother, who told, in all the beautiful plainness of the scripture story, how “ David prevailed over the Philistine with a

sling and with a stone," while "there was no sword in the hand of David."

Nor let me hope were those lessons of humble faith and patient confidence forgotten, which this most affecting passage of Scripture is so well adapted to convey.

But its applicability to the present occasion may not at first sight appear so evident as on maturer consideration I trust to render it.

I appear, my brethren, before you this morning, at the request of your appointed minister, as the humble advocate of your parochial Sunday schools. And it is with feelings of great delight and sincere interest that I find myself called upon to address you this day. To one whose office it is constantly to intercede "for the good estate of the Catholic Church," and to offer "prayers and supplications and giving of thanks for all men," it should ever afford cause of joy and gratitude to see the work of our common Lord, in any portion of his blood-bought Church, thrive, prosper, and increase. [But when to these general considerations are added more special and particular ones,* and when I can bear my feeble testimony to the great zeal and alacrity of your school's present instructors, and the ready desire for instruction of many, at

* In reference to certain local associations connected with the schools at Mansfield Woodhouse, which it is not thought needful, though mentioned from the pulpit, to particularize in print

least, of its children, I do feel indeed, my brethren, that they have established a claim upon my poor and unworthy services which can be pleaded by very few other schools beside !”]

May that God without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy, increase and multiply upon us his mercy this day. May he give you one and all a liberal, willing, and ready mind, and command his gracious blessing both upon my words to you and your offerings to him. Lord, vouchsafe us this and every other favour, for the sake of thy dear Son.

Now the words of the text, *in a spiritual sense*, are most strikingly appropriate to the cause which we are now advocating. A greater and more formidable giant than Goliath of Gath, has long been threatening to spread his baneful and destructive influence over our native land. That giant is *ignorance*:—ignorance of ourselves—ignorance of our prospects—ignorance of our situation—and ignorance of our God. That it is also highly desirable that this giant should be vanquished and overcome, is a point as readily admitted by all parties *now*, as the destruction of Goliath of Gath was a point most earnestly wished for by Saul and the men of Israel *then*. But, as in the former case, so also in the latter, there are totally opposite ways proposed as conducive to the same end. Goliath must, at all events, be conquered ; but who is to compete with the haughty boaster ? with what

weapons and how? Is it to be the man of war, or the stripling shepherd? Is it to be the tender of sheep, or the follower of Saul? Or, supposing even that question satisfactorily answered, and David be the chosen champion of Israel's camp and Israel's God, how is he to conduct the attack? Is it with the warrior's helmet, or the shepherd's staff? Is it to be David in Saul's armour, or David with his humble scrip? Is the brook or the armoury to furnish his artillery? Shall the glittering sword, or the smooth pebble, decide the fate of the all-important field?

And so in the subject now before us, the analogy holds precisely the same. The question is *not*, *Shall* our children be educated? and *shall* their native ignorance be destroyed and vanquished? but, *HOW* is this ADMISSEDLY desirable object to be attained and accomplished? Who is to educate them, and how? Shall it be the Church or the state? Shall they be trained for time or eternity? Shall the follower of Saul be the champion, or the lowly David? On the one hand, shall religion be made a secondary consideration, or altogether omitted, or so generalised and diluted as to lose all the lustre of its fine and heaven-wrought gold? or, on the other, shall it be made first and paramount, taught in all its pureness, all its fulness, aye, and what the world calls, in all its illiberality, bigotry, and exclusiveness too? Shall David go clad in Saul's armour? shall worldly and secular knowledge

be preferred to divine and religious truth? or shall David go forth in the simple might of David's Lord? Shall religious knowledge correct and sanctify every other? shall it be taught before all, temper all, mingle with all? Shall the child be armed with the stones of religious principles, preserved in the safe, though time-worn sling of the Catholic Church, and so smiting the giant of ignorance in resistless might, smite him once and for ever? or shall he be girt with that worldly knowledge which will only encumber him in the day of battle, and that secular learning which will fly back from the giant's shield like the thousand fragments of a broken spear?

In plain words, we have to enquire, who shall fight the battle with ignorance, and what shall be the issue of the contest? Brethren, I trust you are, one and all, prepared to say, We will fight with God's weapons; our beginning of wisdom shall be his fear, and so arming our sons and daughters according to his direction, we will leave them in perfect confidence to his almighty care.

And then in his name I can promise you that the sling and the stone shall amply suffice, yea, although this be all their armour, and neither sword nor spear be found in our striplings' hands. And so, as we have read in this morning's service, we may humbly trust our sons shall grow up as the young plants, and our daughters become as the polished corners of the temple.

In pursuing, then, this important subject, let us consider what is the nature of that education which will make our children really victorious in the struggle between themselves on the one hand, and ignorance and sin on the other. And I trust that thus in this parish we shall gain encouragement to pursue our course without wavering or drawing back, and being stedfast, unmoveable, and always abounding in the work of the Lord, find at the last that, because it *is His* work, that labour has not been in vain in the Lord.

Consider, then,

I. The end proposed.

II. The means for its accomplishment.

First—What is the end proposed in all education?

Surely it is precisely the same as that of the youthful combatant in our text: in one word, it is "*to prevail*," to gain a decisive victory over that ignorance and sin which will both destroy the usefulness of the citizen and mar the prospects of the Christian.

That this object is most desirable, that every measure grounded on correct principles which may forward its accomplishment is most praiseworthy, is freely admitted upon all hands. Our children are not sent into the world to lead a life of sloth or inactivity. And the experience of all ages has attested that ignorance and idleness are the fruitful progenitors of error and of sin. Indeed, how can it by any possibility be otherwise? If

persons do not *know* what is right, error ensues as a matter of course; and if no thirst for useful knowledge be implanted, the hands that are paralyzed towards good will only recover their benumbed faculties to employ them in the direction of evil. An unstored, undisciplined, untrained character, is vicious in itself, and dangerous to the community. The Philistine *must* be overcome, or Israel will fall his prey.

So far all parties coincide. The cry of the present day is in its favour. Increase of knowledge, Diffusion of learning, are the very watch-words of the existing age.

Two points, however, must be cleared up with reference to the end proposed before we can pass on to consider the means for its accomplishment. First, How far is education to be carried? Secondly, How long are the effects of it intended to last?

1. How far is it to be carried?

We require a remedy commensurate with the disease: *but no further than commensurate*. He would be a very unskilful physician who, in applying stimulants to recover his patient from long continued weakness, should carry them to such an injudicious excess as to superinduce an attack of inflammation or of fever. And we, my brethren, must be on our guard in this respect, lest by educating *beyond* the mark, we make the remedy worse than the disease. Had David aimed

at all Philistia's host at once, instead of the haughty champion of it, we can scarcely imagine he would have returned victorious. If then our purpose be to train our children to get their own living, to pursue with credit a fair and honest occupation, or, to use the comprehensive words of our beautiful Catechism, "to do their duty *in* that state, (mark ! *not beyond*, but *in* it,) *in* that state of life to which it shall please God to call them," then, I answer, so far all is well,—they require as much as this,—they require nor jot nor tittle more.

I see neither sense nor charity, but much folly, and far more mischief in making our mechanics classics, or our ploughboys, philosophers. Train them to write and cypher, give them some knowledge of an honest trade or a useful calling ; and, in like manner, let the daughters of our people be educated in such a manner as may afterwards fit them for discharging aright those household duties, and gently ministering to those domestics comforts, which are woman's peculiar province, and the end proposed, *as far as this world goes*, is accomplished ; our sons and daughters will grow up useful and hardworking citizens, not strutting coxcombs, nor prattling fools.

But, again, *how long* is the effect of the education now given to continue ? And now we come at once to an issue with the promoters of mere secular knowledge. Man, my brethren, is a two-fold being ; man is to live in a two-fold world. Above

all, my brethren, man is an *immortal* being ; man (oh ! let every child and every teacher in this Sunday school alike remember this) man is to live for *ever* ! Is then education the end proposed ? And is *that*, men and brethren, can it be, is it possible, that *that* should be even named education which leaves the training of the “ deathless principle,” of the immortal part, of the imperishable soul, entirely uncared for and unprovided ? Is that worthy of the very *name* of teaching which merely extends itself over the course of a few rolling years, and those very years by necessity short, and, besides their very shortness, by probability uncertain ; and then leaves out all that religious instruction which can alone soothe the bitterness of earth, and conduct at last to the unfading joys of heaven ? Oh, God ! forgive those who have been fools enough to dream of such a scheme, and sinners enough to practise it ! Does it not stand to reason, my brethren, that if man *be* a two-fold being, that his education must be tow-fold also ? Does it not stand to reason, my brethren, that if man is to live in this present world for a few short years at the furthest, and in an eternal world for years unnumbered and untold, that it is of infinitely greater consequence that he should be prepared for eternity than for the transitory hours of time ? Tell me, I pray you, what would you think of a teacher who would only instruct a child of four years old in its mere letters, and refuse to proceed further

in its education, alleging, as her reason, that the knowledge of the alphabet would be quite amply sufficient for it until the age of six? Would not every person of common sense exclaim, "Yes! but what is to become of the child *after* six years of age? It will soon attain that period; and is it never to learn anything beyond it? We want such an education laid and fostered now as may prove its usefulness, not only at six, but at sixteen, and at sixty!" Yet, my brethren, surely those teachers are far more foolish, and infinitely more culpable, who leave entirely out of their system that one thing needful, those holy principles of religion which alone can regulate the course of life, soothe the pillow of death, and open the golden gate of the paradise of God. Oh! recollect, every parent, every minister, every teacher, your training is to last for ever,—**YOU ARE EDUCATING FOR ETERNITY!**

And now let us review for one moment what has been urged. The end proposed is education; this education must be a solid and useful, not a fine and tawdry one; it must extend to the soul as well as the body, and give the most prominent place to that state which is unseen and eternal. In a word, to quote again the language of our Church, it must train our children to be instruments of promoting God's glory, "by serving him faithfully, and doing good in their generation," and at the same time prepare them for "those heavenly habitations where the souls of them that sleep in

the Lord Jesus, enjoy perpetual rest and felicity.”* It must teach them to pass with credit through things temporal, to attain with safety to the things eternal.

II. Consider, then, in the second place, *the means for its accomplishment.*

For the destruction of the Philistine there appeared three methods which might possibly have been pursued: *first*, that some champion from the camp of Israel should compete with and overcome him without any aid from David at all; *next*, that David should go to the attack, but clad in Saul’s armour; and, *lastly*, that David should pursue his own course, equipped with his own natural weapons, and none beside. The analogy is strikingly similar with the three plans at this moment proposed, even in our own British senate, for the education of the children of our people. Some are for educating without religion at all; some upon a generalized, diluted system of religion, combining all denominations; and, lastly, and, as we believe, most correctly, there are those who are for basing education on its only true and solid foundation, the religion of the Bible, as explained and maintained by the formularies of the Church; or, in other words, on the Bible, not as it may be turned or twisted by man, but as we believe it was in the main originally intended by Almighty God;

* Prayer for a sick child, in the “Visitation of the Sick.”

or upon what the Bible, as we think, *does* say, not all that jarring sects may *make* it say.

The interest excited by this subject is so great among all classes, that, though I fear I shall considerably exceed the limits of a single discourse, I cannot refrain from bestowing a few words on each of these projects, and request your earnest and patient attention.

The first party, who are for educating without religion at all, may be compared to some champion in Israel's camp, who, without aid from David, or call from David's God, would go forth, in his usual armour, and his own unassisted might, to compete with a fearful giant, who would soon strip the presumptuous hero of all the armour wherein he trusted, and very presently divide the paltry spoils.

The cry of this party is, "Civilize first, and Christianize afterwards." The word of God teaches the entire contradictory to this. "Seek my kingdom," it exclaims, "and seek it FIRST." I have already attempted to shew how unworthy the very name of education is that system which omits all provision for man's nobler, man's undying part. But grant, for argument's sake, that it was entitled to the name, does experience attest the truth of the maxim here laid down? *Does* Christianity necessarily result from civilization? Is secular knowledge the best forerunner and pioneer of religious truth? Go, look at Greece and Rome! Were not they civilized? Were not they educated?

Were not they refined? Yet, were they pre-disposed to Christianity? Did the gospel meet a heartfelt reception among those abodes of learning? Ask St. Paul. "We preach Christ crucified,—to the Greeks foolishness. Ye see your calling, brethren, not many wise men, not many mighty, not many noble are called." Ask your Saviour. "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." Then come to modern times. Notice the philosophic talent of a Hume, or the sparkling wit of a Voltaire. Yet, did all their knowledge and acquirements prove sufficient to overcome natural selfishness, licentiousness, or hypocrisy?

Come close home to yourselves. Look at your Chartists and Socialists, your cheap literature and penny magazines, and what are the fruits of such mere unsanctified learning? I will tell you—to *raise men from the level of brutes only to sink them to the grade of devils!* Better, infinitely better, is the grossest, darkest, blackest ignorance than knowledge without religion, than education without God! Oh! what will all the dogmas of philosophy, all the pursuits of literature, all the recreations of science, the knowledge of the heights of mountains, or the depths of rivers, avail the soul in its time of greatest need? Can it support it for one moment on the bed of death? Can it minister one atom of comfort to the wretched spirit when it

shall stand trembling and despairing before an unsought and neglected God ?

But I cannot help hoping that no advocates of such an infidel system as this are to be found in such a congregation as the present.

Then we pass on to notice *next* the *second* plan proposed. *David* shall be the champion, (say this party) but it shall be David in Saul's armour. Why not have an union of all religious denominations, omitting any peculiar dogmas of each, and teaching our young people's minds no controversial points of divinity, but only a general system, upon which all may agree ?

Now, doubtless, all this sounds extremely fine and liberal, and, to use that hackneyed and oft employed phrase, "in full accordance with the maxims of an enlightened age;" and, as it wears so specious a mask, and I greatly fear obtains too many supporters, even in *nominally* Church of England schools,* I will do my best to expose its hollowness, and unmask its speciousness to the eye of every candid observer.

* Nothing can be a more fearful proof of this, than the fact that in many schools, even I believe *many supported by the National Society*, holy baptism is not made *absolutely* necessary, previous to the admission of scholars. I earnestly call the attention of all persons connected with the Archidiaconal Boards of Education to this fact. How a clergyman can teach an unbaptized child on the same footing as a baptized one, I know not. Those that the Church permits him not to bury when dead, are surely not the fittest associates for the lambs of his fold while they are alive.

Against, then, this system, I at once produce three charges.

1. It is sinful.
2. It is useless.
3. It is impossible.

First—It is most sinful.

My fellow labourers, Sunday school monitors, and teachers, we are not at liberty to teach what we will, or as much, or as little as we will, and *clipping as well as coining is high treason in the court of the King of kings.*

Our blessed Redeemer bade His Church (and under her, and with her alone, have any of you any right to act, or any promise of success if you *do* act) to teach not only the things he commanded, but *all* the things; not one word did he drop about that most convenient, but most unscriptural distinction of fundamentals and non-fundamentals, of essentials and non-essentials. “Go teach *all* things,” so runs our charter, “all things *whatsoever* I commanded you.” If you leave out *one* of those all, you are disobeying your Master’s command, and have no right to expect his favour or blessing, (I mean, of course, if you do so determinately and wilfully.)

Again; so far from allowing you to join with those who separate from his Church, and meet them on neutral ground, he has most plainly told you, to “mark and avoid them,” (Romans xvi. 17, 18); so far from advising you to hush up

common differences, he has bade you, by his apostle St. Jude, earnestly (though, of course, with feelings of love in your hearts, and words of meekness on your lips) “earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints;” so far from permitting you to omit parts of the truth, he has added a most solemn warning against him that would attempt either to diminish or add thereto. And I should ill discharge my duty as his minister to-day did I not press this point home to every Sunday school teacher, and exhort them not to keep back part of the price, nor fail to declare to their pupils, the *whole* unblemished counsel of God. Nor can I refrain from warning all persons to be most careful to peruse before distribution, and from time to time to improve and alter the publications of that “Religious Tract Society,” which deliberately, in the very teeth of all these solemn prohibitions, tries to unite Judah and Samaria, and suppresses always, even where it does no worse, parts of those most solemn truths which Christ ordered to be taught, and which his Catholic Church has in all ages dutifully received.* But even if the plan for

* I do not here wish to be misunderstood, I do not deny that many of these tracts are most excellent, as far as they go, but I do maintain that the *principle* of them all is most false and defective, and further, that many of the tracts themselves are most erroneous in their statements, and dangerous in their consequences. For purity is placed after principle, and truth after peace. And I defy any, even of the staunchest supporters of such an association to declare, that it has not failed to set

educating all religious denominations on a common basis were not a most sinful, it would be

2. *A most useless plan.*

Did you ever yet hear of a whole without parts ?

before its contributors the *whole* counsel of God. The authority of the Christian ministry,—the necessity of the two sacraments to salvation,—the doctrines of infant and regenerating baptism,—the benefit of confirmation,—the difference between Catholicity and schism,—and the nature of the visible Church, are points either untouched or misrepresented in all its publications. And happy will the writer of this note feel himself should this statement be the means of causing any single clergyman or Sunday-school teacher narrowly to sift and carefully to watch the tendency of this society's publications. How can we conscientiously warn our flocks of the danger of dissent when we are at the same time putting constantly into their hands tracts which inculcate that it is quite non-essential whether they attend "Church or Chapel?" I do verily believe more dissent has been fostered by these most pernicious tracts than by almost any other means whatsoever. Now, supposing even many of the Christian Knowledge Society Tracts be defective (as I, for one, am prepared to admit that several are) in several important points of Christian doctrine, still the fault is in the individual tract, not in the whole system. Such and such a tract may be *accidentally* erroneous, but it was not purposely and systematically rendered so. And it is surprising that when such beautifully plain, natural, and sound tracts are now publishing by Mr. Burns, that many persons who have been awakened to Church principles, should prefer the long-worded, dry, and defective publications of the Religious Tract Society, when that beautifully written little book, "Cousin Rachel," and various others of the same stamp, are so much better in every way adapted to their purpose.

If the publications of the Tract Society are to be distributed at all, surely this and such as these should follow upon them to add what is wanted, and correct what is erroneous.

of a body without limbs? of a tree without branches? of a year without days? of a circumference without space? And yet all these absurdities stand precisely upon the same footing as a religion without doctrine, as a system without peculiarities. These very doctrines, these very peculiarities, form the very essential difference of Christianity.

They are part and parcel of its essence, and, if it be at all to affect the heart and guide the life, it must be through and because of them in a greater or a less degree. For example:—to teach a man that there is a heaven is most useless, except you teach him that Christ is the way; and if you teach him as much as this, you trench at once on to the borders of controversy; and yet, if you teach him anything less than this, you have, to all practical purposes, taught him nothing at all.

Then, thirdly, we boldly maintain that the scheme for the union of all denominations under a general system of religious education, is

3. *Plainly and altogether* IMPOSSIBLE. I will just suppose the matter to be tried; and now enter such a school with me and see the result: recollecting first, that, if we open our doors to one religious sect, we have no right, in justice or in equity, to close those doors upon another.

I will take it for granted then that on the most generalized system of religious education, these three truths would of course be taught:—

1. That there is a God.
2. That we ought to pray to him.
3. That we ought to obey his word.

And I require no more than these three propositions entirely to upset the whole system, despite of all its false charity and seeming speciousness.

1. Then, first, if you teach them that there is a God, if you follow the Holy Scriptures, you must tell them also, that in the unity of this Godhead there be three persons of one substance, power, and eternity; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. But here the Socinian or Unitarian would at once object, and withdraw his children. You have your choice, therefore, to deny the Holy Trinity, or in other words, to teach a *different* God from the God of the Bible, or else to exclude all Unitarians at once and for ever from your system.

2. Again, take the second point, that we ought to pray to God: but *how*, and *for whom*? If you say, "in the name of our blessed Saviour," you must then shew that he is more than man, and that it is his precious bloodshedding and atonement, that gives efficacy to all our prayers: and here, again, the Socinian will disagree. *For whom*, too, will you teach your children to pray? the Romanist will answer, for the dead as well as the living; and in an unknown tongue as well as the vernacular one. Proceed a step further, and ask *where* we should pray; and you gain as many and as various answers as there are various and contending sects.

3. But go on to the third point, and you arrive at the climax of the whole.

Let it once be admitted we ought to obey the word of God, (and of course no one who believes that the Almighty ever penned a revelation, can doubt that man ought to guide his footsteps by that revelation) and we open such a field to controversy as no skill or subterfuge, however artful or finely drawn, can by any possibility evade.

The Romanist and Socinian will at once object to our authorised version of the Scriptures as incorrect, while we of the Church of England, in common in this respect with Protestant dissenters, will of course refuse to submit to theirs.—Then, in the word of God, we read of two sacraments, both necessary to salvation; here the Romanist has seven, and the Quaker none at all.*—[See St. John iii. 5, and vi. 53. Mark—Christ makes *water as well* as the Holy Ghost necessary to enter his kingdom. Either they are wrong, or Christ has done a needless *thing*.—Can a Quaker answer this?] We read of a visible Church continuing in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship; here the dissenter will cry out that there is no visible church at all, but only an invisible one, consisting of all true believers.—We read of bishops, priests, and deacons, who alone can administer Christ's sacraments and ordinances;

* Would that every person who has Quaker friends, who may read this Sermon, would request them carefully to peruse "Quakerism examined" by Mr. Wilkinson, of High Wycomb. Bucks, himself a Quaker till nearly 60 years of age.

the dissenter will deny, or explain away this necessary truth.—We read of a Church that should have kings for its nursing fathers, and queens for its mothers; the Independent, in direct opposition to this, declares the union of Church and State to be unholy and unscriptural.—We declare Infant Baptism to be “most agreeable to the institution of Christ;” (Article XXVII.) the Anabaptist will declare that there is no warrant in Scripture for it at all.—We teach, that in many things we offend all, (Article XV.) while the Methodist will fondly dream of a state of sinless perfection, in a sin-stained heart and sin-sunk world.—In a word, we claim to interpret God’s word according to the teaching of the holy Catholic Church in the first ages, as it is now summed up in our Creeds and ritual; the Romanist interprets it according to the novelties of the Council of Trent; the dissenter twists and distorts it into all the imaginable absurdities arising from an unrestrained abuse of each man’s private judgment.

How impossible then, my brethren, that there can be any conjoined religious system of education, established upon such a sandy basis as this! No, it is totally and entirely out of the question, for however much we may respect, regard, and pity those who may unhappily dissent from us, (highly conscientious as some of them no doubt are) still truth can never be pieced with error, nor unity with division.

III. One plan then only remains,—that upon which I trust and hope these Sunday schools are and ever will be conducted.

Let David go forth to the battle in his own simple armour, let his staff be in his hand, and the smooth stones of the brook resting in his scrip. Let religious principles, as explained by Christ's holy Catholic Church in its earliest and purest ages, be his weapons of defence. And the words of the text shall still be true, "So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone : but there was no sword in the hand of David."

And (if I may again employ words which I used on another occasion*) let us all remember, that if national education has failed, as doubtless it too often has, it has not been because the instruction upon that system has been too exclusively religious ; but because it has not been religious enough ;—because it has often been more *about* religion than religious itself ;—because it has been more allied to teaching than training ;—because mental instruction has been more attended to than moral culture,—the imparting of knowledge more than the formation of character ;—because public catechizing, that great engine of national reformation, has been almost universally neglected, or

* In a Sermon preached in 1841, at Hinckley, and printed by request, entitled, "The Lengthening of the Church's Cords, and the Strengthening of her Stakes ;" price One Shilling : Rivingtons, London ; Crossley, Leicester.

made at best, in its mere verbal repetition, but a penitential dish of bitter herbs for the short six weeks of Lent—as unpalatable to the catechist as disagreeable to the catechumens.—Above all, because Church principles have not been plainly and unflinchingly inculcated ; and plain words, untiring love, and earnest zeal, been crowned, with what is worth more than all together, and without which no teacher should ever meet his class, I mean, *unceasing, unwearying, and heart-felt prayer*. Let these rents in David's sling be duly amended, and David's smooth stone of the brook will yet do its master's work. But if either secular learning, or generalized Christianity, gets the better of Church principles in our Sunday and daily schools, woe be even to David himself, if he venture forth, thus arrayed in Saul's unproven armour !

And in *these* days especially, it should be a most solemn question to the mind of every teacher, "What have I said, what have I taught those committed to my trust, sufficient to keep them from the errors of Popery on the one hand, or the endless wanderings of dissent on the other ? (And here let me remind all fathers and mothers, that what is here said to teachers, applies with ten-fold force to parents. Your children are to *learn* of *us*, but they are to *live* with *you* ; they are *our* care, but *your own* flesh and blood.) Ask then, both parents and teachers, have I always prayed for God's blessing on my instruction ? Have I prepared my children

for renewing their baptismal vow in the solemn ordinance of confirmation, and endeavoured to fit them for becoming meet and early communicants at the Redeemer's holy table? Have I taught them obedience to their Queen, and all in authority under her? Have I implanted in them a deep reverence for the *office* of the priests of God, whatever may be their character as *men*? Have I led them to value their prayers, blessings, and absolutions? Have I nurtured obedience to parents, and brotherly love one towards another? Have I watched their prevailing habits and tempers? Have I tried to bring the Scriptures home to each heart; have I trained them up to a careful observance of the Lord's day; have I explained to them the especial beauty of the church's services? have I urged on them kindly, and with soft words of love, meditation, self-examination, Scripture reading, and above all, daily prayer (under a sense of their own weakness) for God's blessed and strengthening Spirit? In a word, what have I said, what have I taught those committed to my trust, which, through God's mercy, may enable them to lead useful lives, and to die peaceful deaths?

Oh! my fellow teachers, believe me if you have ever been called (and doubtless some among you have been so called) to stand by the bed of death in nature's trying hour,—to press the clammy hand,—to wipe the aching brow,—to watch the glazing eye, you must have felt *then*, if you ever felt it at

all, the question strike home in awful power to your hearts, "Have I, according to the ability wherewith God hath blessed me, performed my duty towards this little lamb's departing soul? Have I watched each rising of temper, each hasty word, each mark of unholy character?"

Have I led it to Jesus Christ for pardon, and to the Holy Spirit for a renewed and holy heart? Have I told it that, as a baptized member of Christ's Catholic Church, it has received a right to all the promises, and exhorted it to embrace the same? In one word, have I not only tried to inform its head, but tried to touch and improve its heart?

If not, my brethren, at that most affecting period, if we are then weighed in the balance, we shall (alas) be found wanting. But if we have, Oh, what will be our joy and gladness when our beloved sons and daughters, *though perhaps separated from us on earth*, shall welcome us at the last, as those who watered the trees of the Lord's planting here below, until they flourished for ever in the better Paradise above!

My brethren, you have heard this day, what education we profess to offer to the children committed to our care. And now let me, in conclusion, request all teachers and masters to impart such knowledge at school, and all you, who are fathers and mothers, by holy example and by holy precepts, to help instead of hindering your children's

salvation at home. It is the glory of a Sunday school to train up citizens for Zion, and souls for immortality; pray then, beloved brethren, that he who as we trust, hath begun a good work in this parish, would carry it on both in you and your children, unto the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And brethren, surely every one of you will lend us at least some little aid in this pious and blessed work. If it be not the will of your heavenly Father that one of these little ones should perish, do not let your eye be evil, when his is so merciful and good. It has been related that a poor distressed creature was once discovered, whom his own hands had hurried into eternity, with this inscription suspended around his neck, "*One penny would have saved me from THIS!*"—Imagine to yourselves if the last persons that had refused relief to this pitiable object, could have viewed his pale corpse, and read this touching inscription, what would have been the agony of their feelings, what the extent of their remorse! And yet after all they might have argued he might have been a mere pretender, and no fit object for their charity. I pray God your feelings may never be such as theirs whom I have supposed, for what might have been *their* excuse can never be pleaded as *yours*. But remember a day is coming when they that refused to receive a little child in Christ's name, will be judged to have refused him—when the Judge will exclaim "I was an hungred and ye

gave me no meat, I was thirsty and ye gave me no drink." Beware lest this awful sentence befall any of you! Surrounded by a dense and impoverished population, Christ by these children says, "give ye *me* to eat." "whoso receiveth one little child in my name receiveth *me*." And is it nothing to you all ye that pass by? Here when soul after soul is starving for the bread of life, surrounded as they are by vice, drunkenness, licentiousness, rebellion, and poverty, (least evil of the five) will you go on in luxury and affluence doling out a mere pittance, a mere scanty subscription it may be, unencouraged by Christ's promised blessing, unawed by his most assuredly impending curse? Is there *nothing* that you can give up? no new article of dress;—no fresh project of pleasure? Will fasting not help you? Will gratitude not constrain you? Will self denial make no sacrifices? Must our children perish for lack of knowledge, because there is no one to lead their tottering feet to the smooth stones of God's truth, and the crystal stream of God's word? Forbid it charity! forbid it faith! forbid it heaven! Men, brethren, and fathers, look at these children's little hands; would you rather see them clenched in passion or bent in prayer; lifted perhaps in time against their fellow men, because not in early youth lifted up to their gracious and forgiving God? Oh! come then to the rescue! Vow each one of you to give up something from this day. Renounce

it at yonder altar,* and lay your alms thereupon instead! Give from love to him, who “gave up life and all for you”—and look! your gift shall be returned to you again—returned here, with many a blessing, if it please God on earth,—returned, (oh, how far more then returned!) when these poor despised little ones shall rise up and call you blessed before men and angels! before earth and heaven!

Finally, my beloved children, I have hitherto been pleading, *for* you, now let me plead one minute *with* you. Remember whose you are, and whom you serve. Remember by baptism you are God’s children, then be followers of him as *dear* children. Remember by baptism you are members of Christ’s Church, then never separate from it on the one hand, nor disgrace it by wilfully sinning on the other. Remember by baptism you are inheritors of heaven, take heed then that a promise being left you of entering into rest, you do not, by forsaking your Father’s hand, forfeit for ever his gracious inheritance. Ask then every day for the Holy Spirit to help you in doing what is right; and every day beseech the Lord Jesus to forgive you whatever and wheresoever you have done wrong. Diligently obey your teachers, honour your parents, and love one another. Grow in grace; do what is right as well as learn it. And

* The Subscription was made according to the Rubric, “during the reading of the sentences of the Offertory.”

as you, like David, have to war a good warfare against sin, the world, and the devil, come, like him, and out of the brook of God's word choose you five smooth stones to assist you : let the first be *humility*, the second *faith*, the third *love*, the fourth *holiness*, and the fifth *prayer*. With these you will be more than conquerors through him that loved you. Be *humble*, for you are great and grievous sinners ; be *faithful*, for Jesus died for sinners, and has promised his Holy Spirit to help them in doing what is right ; be filled with *love* to this blessed Saviour, for he first loved you ; and then, if you sincerely love him, you will be *holy*, for he is holy, and you will long to be like *him*. Lastly, take the smooth stone of *prayer*, carry it always in your hand, for you want it *always* ; and often when about your work at home or in the fields, you can lift up your hearts in prayer to God ; remember, too, God has said, pray without ceasing, and he that prays always is safe always too. And then, dear children, when the giant comes, the Lord will come too. When sin rises up in the heart, prayer will keep it down, and faith will lift you up. When you get proud, and think yourselves good and clever, humility will remind you that you are but "vile earth and miserable sinners;" when you are tempted to sin, holiness will get the better of the temptation ; when you are laughed at for your religion, or persuaded to separate from your Church, love will

firmly bear up against all this, for his sake who loved you and gave himself for you. Yes, you will love Christ, who is the head, and, for his sake, "the Church, which is his body," (Ephes. i. 22, 23.) And at the last you will want all your courage to meet that last terrible giant, the king of terrors, the last enemy that shall be destroyed. But the sling and the stone shall be a match even for death himself, shall shiver his dreadful dart, and blunt the edge of his sweeping scythe. And, after death,—no more fightings,—no more sin,—no more sorrow,—the shepherd's scrip shall be no more needed, when the soldier's work is done.

" Then should the scoffer in his pride
 " Laugh your first faith to scorn,
 " And bid you cast that robe aside
 " Which ye from youth have worn. .
 " I bid you pause and ask your breast,
 " Which of the twain have loved you best."*

* From "A mother's Gift."

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